

# The Pocahontas Times.

Andrew & Norman Price, Owners.

"Montani Semper Liberi!"

Andrew Price, Editor

VOL. 16, NO. 37

MARLINTON, WEST VIRGINIA, APRIL 6, 1899.

\$1.00 PER YEAR

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DR. O. J. CAMPBELL,  
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Will visit Pocahontas County at least twice a year. The exact date of his visit will appear in this paper.

DR. J. H. WEYMOUTH,  
RESIDENT DENTIST,

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Will visit Pocahontas County every spring and fall. The exact date of each visit will appear in The Times.

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## ARCADIA'S LAND.

Which is the way from the crowded city To a land of shadow and silent peace Where women can love and man can pity?

And tears from sorrowing eyes may cease? For the tolling town is harsh and hollow, And hate points eastward, envy west; Though many may fall, yet some will follow To a home of dreams and a haven of rest.

For the love of heaven, stretch forth your hand, And point the way to Arcadia's land.

Where are the fields, and their emerald cover,

The wayside flowers, and traveling carts, The loved love and the long tried lover?

They are better by far than our feverish art, We are sick unto death of jealousy's fretter.

The secret dagger and ceaseless strife; There's triumph in fame, but freedom is better;

So give us a taste of a nobler life, The senses sicken as fancy's hand, Paints endless love in Arcadia's land.

Arcadia's ways are strewn with flowers Her children free from the revel of wine;

Her dust is slaked by the sweetened showers, 'Neath trees they toast and dine, When care creeps close away they wander.

To seek whatever the mind loves best, For hope endures when the mind sees "yonder"

A purer life and a surer rest, How many despise, but how few with stand, The ceaseless joy of Arcadia's land.

To the fields away! For nature presses On toiling foreheads a balmy kiss; There nothing so sweet as her wild caresses.

No love more full to the lips than this, God grant, my brothers, when all is over, And holiday hours cut short my fate, That the sense of flowers and scent of clover

May soften sorrow and silence hate, Old time soon measures the fatal sand, And the curtain falls on Arcadia's land.—Author Unknown.

## From the Records.

### Annals of a Notable Trial in the Days of Slavery.

On the 17th of December, 1825,

a female slave officially known as Peggy murdered her new born babe, in Pocahontas county, and was tried for the crime at the January term, 1826. The girl was the property of Major William Poage, who was one of the most prominent men of the county in the early days of which we write. He was on the county court, was sheriff, and held office in the military organization of the county. His plantation consisted of the lands which were known as Marlin's Bottom for years and which now comprise the site of the town of Marlinton. The old house stood in the old orchard near the residence of Circuit Clerk J. H. Patterson, just opposite the old Price place. He has many lineal descendants in this county, among them the writer, who is a great-grandson.

The slave's crime presented one of the most revolting phases of slavery. She rebelled against bearing children for the benefit of white person. As will be seen from the evidence which was taken down a clear case of infanticide was proved against the prisoner, but that she was cleared. There is a tradition in the family that there was a sort of agreement on the part of her owner that she should be transported in case she was acquitted. Any way it was done and she was sent to another state and sold soon afterwards.

The prisoner was led in by the jailer and Ludwell Richards was appointed counsel for the defense. Major Poage made the following statement:

"All I know about it is this: On Saturday morning the 17th of December last, I understood the girl complained of being sick. I called her in the house and told her, 'I understand you deny to all the girls of being in the family way?' I told her I did not believe the report. I wished her to tell me the truth. I told her I was master of the place, and likewise told her I felt my duty bound me to make provision for her if it was the case. Her answer to me was that there was nothing of that kind the matter with her. It was cold she caught and then observed that she had had a sister in the same way who died at last, and then observed that Warwijk Gatewood had a

negro woman last summer who went in the same way. Said I, 'Peggy, I do not believe you.' Her answer to me was, 'Master, if I am in that way I do not know it.'

"I suspected her of being in that way, and on the night of the day aforesaid I fixed up my warping bars and warped a web in order to keep the family awake to watch her. I likewise told my wife to bring Black Polly in the kitchen to watch her. I still found she complained of being sick. It was a very wet night. I sent my black boy John for Mrs. Tharp, a white woman in the neighborhood. He returned and told me Mrs. Tharp was not at home. I then immediately sent him for Mrs. Gay. He returned and told me she was crippled and could not come. The next morning I saw the child dead when we went to bury it."

Mrs. Mary C. Poage then testified. This lady was Major Poage's second wife and survived him. She afterwards married a Mr. Wallace of Rockbridge, and so became the stepmother of Big-foot Wallace, the hero of pioneer Texas. She died childless.

"On the night of the 17th of December last Peggy complained of being very unwell. I visited her several times; I at length told her I was willing to do anything I could for her if she would let me know what was the matter. She said she did not believe I could do anything for her. I suppose about ten o'clock at night I paid her a visit in the room where she was. I asked her how she felt. She said she was very bad, but had been as bad many a time before by herself and no person knew it. I at length asked her if she would drink some tea if I would go into the house and make it, and before my return Polly, a black girl, sent for me. On my return to her room I found her door fastened on the inside so that I could not get it open. I told her to open the door and let me in, that I had the tea ready for her. She told me to set the tea at the fire in the other room, that she had gotten a little easier and did not want to be disturbed. Said I, 'Peggy, I must see you drink this tea before I leave you.' She told me to please give it to Polly (the black girl) to set by the fire and she would come out presently and drink it. Said I, 'Peggy, that will not do; your master charged me I must see you drink it before I leave you.' She then opened the door. I perceived what she had been about. Said I, 'Peggy, what in the name of goodness have you been about here?' She answered, 'Nothing at all, madam.'

"Said I, 'Peggy, you have had a child and you have killed that child.'

"She said, 'No, madam; I did not kill it.'

"I began a search for the child and found it in the bed, wrapped up in the bed clothes. I asked her why she did not let me know her situation. She said her being a stranger she did not wish to put any person to any trouble on the place.

She had denied being in that way and had said if she was it should not do any of us any good; that it should not make any of us rich. The child was wrapped up in a quilt, with its head covered."

The next witness was "Polly, a black girl," as the record puts it. This was the mother of old man Wes Brown, a very old and much respected darkey of the Brush county. Her statement is as follows:

"All that I know of it—I went to the kitchen. Master sent for me to go to the kitchen to mind her. She was in another room. As I was in the big part of the kitchen I heard a child cry twice and started to the house to bring mistress and likewise I returned back and asked her if it was not a young child cried. She said, 'No, it was not; it was her oldest child, Caroline.' I told her it deceived my ears mightily if it was not a young child. She said it was not. Immediately I sent to the house for my mistress to come in and when she came I told her what I had

heard. We wanted to get in the room where she was but she would not let us in for a considerable while. We wanted to get in the room to give her some tea. She told us to set it by the fire in the big kitchen till she came out. We told her master said we must see her drink the tea and we must not tell him a lie, and then she opened the door. She began to cry and told us to let her alone. We asked her what she had been about and she said, 'Nothing at all.'

Then when we went to search for the child we found it in the bed covered up, and as I caught the bed clothes and pulled them off and said, 'Here is the baby, and it is dead,' says she, 'There is not any here'; and as I went to get the child she jumped on top of it, and I caught and held her off till mistress got the child out of the bed; and she denied the child after mistress had it in her lap sitting down with it. I asked her what she denied it for, and she said she did not know she was in that way. Then I told her that she always told me she was not in that way.

If she was it should never do them any good."

The witness denied that there was any feeling between her and the prisoner, and stated that she had admitted the child to be hers the next morning at which time she said she was sorry it was dead. Lizzie, a black girl, was the next witness, testified that the prisoner had told her that if she was to be the mother of a child no person should ever see it.

Jess, a black boy, said: "She told me that master had her in the house and she asked me what I thought it was for? I told her I did not know what it was for. 'Well, says she, I'll tell you what it was for. He had me in the house asking me about me being sick.' She told him there was nothing the matter only that she had caught cold in the river washing bed clothes, and she talked they all thought she was in the family way, but, by God, they would find to the contrary of it. She said if she was in that way it was nobody's business. She said by God it should never do none of them any good."

The court being divided in opinion the prisoner was accordingly acquitted.

It has been remarked that as a slave was valuable property, it must have had some effect upon a court in trying such a prisoner for his life; but the reader will remember that the law concerning the punishment of slaves provided that the owner should be reimbursed for the loss of the services of his slave out of the public treasury.

## Pot Pourri.

"Did you hear about Mr. John Doe burning up a hundred dollar bill this morning?"

"Yes, but I don't think it can be so."

"Why?"

"Because I was needing a little money and I went up to see Mr. John Doe about it. I wanted to borrow \$150 and offered him my 20 acres of good brush land as security. That was yesterday evening. He said he did not have five dollars in money to his name. So unless somebody come in and paid him some money, I guess there's a mistake about it."

Verily politeness is its own reward.

A conversation similar to the one above occurred when the news came last week that the only \$100 bill which was known to be in the county had dropped from the owner's hand into the fire and been destroyed. The news created a profound sensation and set people to discussing the catastrophe.

About twenty years ago before the "rich were growing richer and the poor were growing poorer" to such an alarming extent, and hundred dollar bills abounded in Pocahontas to an appreciable degree, a lady received a hundred dollar bill through the mail and left it

for safe keeping in the envelop. A member of her family decided to clear away some of the letters which had accumulated and among the letters burned was the one containing the \$100 bill.

An old farmer in Virginia had sold his farm for cash and received for it all paper money. He was about to invest it again and took it out to count it once more, and it lay on the table before him in neat piles. Someone opened the door and a strong gust of wind swept in and blew every dollar into the fire. In a moment he had lost his entire future.

The bill to reassess lands shows the fine Italian hand of the politician. When the legislature and the governor agreed in politics the assessors were appointed by the governor, but now the choice is given to the county court, insuring the office to go to a member of the party to which the members of the court belong.

Pocahontas forms the largest assessor's district in the State. All the other large counties are divided into two assessment districts, but Pocahontas has but one assessor of personal property, and his district forms the district of the land assessor. The assessor who secures the position in this county this year will have nearly twice the number of acres to assess of any other assessor in the State, and the limit is the same—100 days at \$3 per day.

To undertake the job means that a man does not care much for his personal popularity with the people, for the land owner paying taxes for ten years will heap very fervent blessings on his head for assessing his land high out of all proportion to the other lands. This equalization of lands is something all but impossible to arrive at, and as land assessment is necessarily below its actual cash value the person who suffers by a unduly high valuation can hardly have it corrected unless he is willing to sell the land for less than it is assessed. The proportion is the thing which hurts the tax payer, but it is not considered by the county court in correcting erroneous assessments.

In regard to the State taxes the board of equalization takes up the assessment of the various counties and aims to reduce or increase the assessment and get the lands all over the State at a uniform valuation. In this county last year the Board of Public Works raised the assessment 25 per cent, which was afterwards reduced to 8 per cent when a strong fight was made and evidence taken of the real productive value of the many thousand acres of the timber land of this county.

Our last assessment was made in 1891. The assessor had been engaged in buying timber lands, as everybody in Pocahontas then was even more certain than now that the railroad development was about to begin, and there was a big trade in mountain lands. The assessor as a land buyer had been trying for a long time to buy a large tract of timber land belonging to a Virginia lawyer. At the June court the lawyer was here and when he was approached by the assessor and asked "What is that land of yours worth?" the lawyer, not knowing he had been appointed assessor, saw a possible buyer began to act accordingly:

"It's worth \$6 an acre, if it's worth a cent! If you give me that much you can have it."

"Oh, I don't want to buy it. I have just been appointed assessor of lands and wanted to see you about your land in Pocahontas. That was all. Good bye."

And the Virginia lawyer when he found out that it was no joke was very much disturbed in his mind.

It might be in order now to investigate the expenditures made in investigating the war expenditures.—Detroit News.

## General Eagan's Beef.

The Army Beef Court of Inquiry has taken much important testimony in Chicago and other Western cities. It is shown that Commissary General Eagan, who is now journeying toward Honolulu to spend the greater part of his vacation of six years on full pay, was directly responsible for the purchase of great quantities of canned "roast" beef, practically without inspection. A part of this was beef of "second grade," and Eagan bought hundreds of thousands of pounds which had been shipped to Liverpool and had been lying there unsold. While there was in Chicago a purchasing agent of the Commissary Department, Lieutenant Colonel Smith, much of this canned "roast" beef was bought over his head by Eagan, who simply ordered him to ship it from Chicago. No inspection, except by sample, appears to have been required. Eagan testified in Washington that it was intended that the contract should bind the packers to supply fresh beef in such condition that it would be good

seventy-two hours after delivery from the refrigerator, and that the words which reduced the time to twenty-four hours were "a clerical error" of which he had no knowledge. A member of the well-known packing firm of Swift & Co. now testifies that these words were inserted in the contract in Eagan's office and by Eagan's order. It has been clearly shown that canned "roast" beef is supplied by cattle of the poorest grade which cannot be marketed in any other form. The contents of the cans are boiled "ebuck" beef, from which much of the nutriment has been extracted, and to which scraps and fat are added. Much testimony concerning the condition of canned beef has been given in the West by soldiers, and nearly all of it is revolting. It is shown that some of this beef was maggotty when it was canned. Surgeons testify that dysentery was caused by the use of a little of the meat, and that in some instances the men who ate it suffered from ptomaine poisoning. Inspectors admit that it has been possible in the packing houses to take the carcasses of condemned cattle from the tanks to which they are consigned and put this meat on the market. Persons who were employed in the packing houses for many years assert under oath that this has been done. At Leavenworth, Sergeant Mason, of the 1st Cavalry, who had acted as a commissary officer during the war, testified that when a certain carload of refrigerated fresh beef was rejected at Lakeland, the agent of Armour & Co. accounted for the appearance of the beef by saying that it was due to the application of "preservative, the chemical we use to preserve it."—The Independent. (N. Y. Ind. Rep.)

## P. D. Armour as a Humorist.

P. D. Armour, the head of the largest packing house in the world has a very keen sense of humor, as the following anecdotes will show.

One day a man carrying a fuzzy little poodle under one arm entered Mr. Armour's office and tried to talk "P. D." into buying it. The price was exorbitant, \$200 for a useless toy poodle. Mr. Armour looked at the man, then at the dog, and back again at the man and said:

"No. The sausage business must pick up considerably before I can pay so much for small dogs. Bring around a mastiff and I'll talk to you."

On another occasion one of those self-confident young men who believe that all wealthy men have a tender spot for the man of nerve, and who do not hesitate to approach even the busiest men, made Mr. Armour a decidedly bold request, which was promptly denied.

Summoning up all the haughtiness at his command, the young man said in a tone that was meant to crush Mr. Armour:

"Well, all I can say is, that you are no gentleman."

"Young man,"—with a cold, enigmatical smile,—"I'm a butcher."

—Evening Post, Philadelphia.

## The Siesta of a Sow.

An Arkansas brief in a suit wherein the plaintiff had succeeded in recovering damages against the receiver of a railroad company for the killing of a sow, which we find in the columns of the Virginia Law Register, makes delightful reading for those who have a sense of appreciation for the humorous in the law. The brief was the joint production of Messrs. Rose, Hemingway, and Rose, by whom it was filed on an appeal by the defeated receiver to the supreme Court of Arkansas. The aforesaid sow, it appears, was peacefully enjoying a midday siesta in the grateful shades of a box-car which stood on a side track, when an unfeeling locomotive backed down upon the car and suddenly transformed the sleep into one that knows no waking. Counsel say that the questions involved have given them great concern, "for we are accustomed to approach the seat of justice armed with authorities, if not with authority, but we confess that after searching from the first Year Book to 170 U. S. we have not found a case in point."

They then proceed to state the question thus: (1) "Must a railroad before starting its train send its servants to look carefully under all cars to ascertain whether a sow is taking her luxurious siesta beneath their tempting shade?" (2) Is it negligence per se for a railroad train to cast a shadow and thereby tempt a sow to seek repose at a time when the company knows that the fiery rays of day's luminary will make her think of sweet slumber under the impenetrable shelter of an opaque body?" (3) If a railroad company lets a sow eat so much of its cotton-seed that she is overcome by somnolence, is it the company's duty to guide her to a spot where her slumbers may be safe and undisturbed?" In another part of the brief the court is asked: "Have you ever seen brakemen armed with poles to awaken sows from their slumbers?" And in another place it is said that "Morpheus loves the hog as Bacchus wine."

The court appears to have answered these questions in the negative, for we are told that Messrs. Rose, Hemingway, and Rose secured a reversal of the judgment.

## GOVERNOR PIERPONT.

At Pittsburg Friday, March 24, Governor Francis Harrison Pierpont passed peacefully away at 9 p. m., aged 86 years.

In early life he was a minister of the Gospel in the M. P. church, then he studied law and became a leading member of the Fairmont bar. He agitated a division of Virginia before the war, and was a leading promoter of the organization of the State of West Virginia, and has since been distinguished as the father of our State.—He was born at Fairmont June 25, 1814, educated at Alleghany College, Pennsylvania, afterward taught school in Mississippi and studied law at the same time. He was pronounced anti-slavery in sentiment and ventilated his views fearlessly in the pulpit, through the press and on the stump. He was the last of the War Governors, being the Union Governor of the restored government of Virginia. When West Virginia was organized he moved the Virginia archives from Wheeling to Alexandria, where he remained until the fall of Richmond, and reorganized the State government at the close of the war. For many years he has lived in comparative retirement.

His remains were carried to Fairmont for interment on the 27th. A vast assemblage, among whom were many distinguished citizens, attended the obsequies. The casket was draped with a flag of historic interest, being the first Union flag made in West Virginia and was furnished by Mrs. Pierpont. This flag was taken to the Union lines before Richmond, just before that city's fall, and was unfurled at the head of the Union column as the troops entered the city, then hoisted over the executive mansion and was the first Union flag to be raised over Richmond.